

## V. P. I. ANSWERS CHARGES

The following statement, signed by President Barringer, of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute, reached The Times-Dispatch some days ago, but it was thought to be for the best interests of the Blacksburg college that the article be held for the Sunday edition.

It is herewith printed in full: To the Friends of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute:

In various recent issues of the State papers there have appeared articles and editorials on the Virginia Polytechnic Institute which appear to call for a statement of facts from those knowing the truth of the situation, and, as president of this institution, I give below a full report on the conditions in question.

First, I will state that, contrary to intimations made, the number of agricultural students at the V. P. I. has steadily increased during the past three years, the catalogue numbers being: for 1906-7, 73; for 1907-8, 82; and for 1908-9, 220, out of a total attendance of 624. In explanation of these figures, I would state that the students in the school of scientific agriculture have been respectively 73, 61, and 78 for the past three years; the students in the farmers' winter course have been respectively 9, 21, and 53 for the same period; while during the past year we had in addition 83 students in the new agricultural apprentice course. It may be charged that not all of these latter students were bona fide students of agriculture, and we do not claim that over one-half of them were, for some of them were using this course as a preparation for other courses in this institution—but

they at least received a full year's training in agriculture, and to that extent became an agricultural asset to the State, which they would never have been but for this course.

Secondly, as regards the accusation being made that the agricultural department now gets the major part of the money used in expansion and equipment, I will have to state that this is true, and I hope to be able to continue this policy in this college of agriculture and mechanic arts, which stand equal in every way in its two fundamental departments. When I entered this institution at the opening of the session of 1907-8, there were but 73 students, all told, on the side of agriculture, and 467 representing other fields. It is true, as charged, that the number of engineering students has declined during the past three years, but the examination will show that this did not occur here alone; it was true all over the land. The recent panic, more than anything else, was responsible. The old saying that "an engineering school is a barometer of trade" declares a simple, well-known truth. I feel that I am well within the facts when I say that the agricultural department is growing absolutely without injury to the engineering department. At the beginning of this year the schools of civil, electrical and mechanical engineering received larger sums for equipment and laboratory support than they have had in many years, not to mention the equipment and maintenance of an entirely new school—the school of mines; and further, under the present administration not a single teacher has been lost to the school of engineering, and several have been added.

Third, as regards tuberculosis in the herd, as far as can be learned there has been tuberculosis in this herd from the day of its purchase, or at least great increase by purchase. In 1902-3, a report from the college veterinarian in March, 1905, showed "twenty-two positives and suspects." A "positive" here means an animal which has reacted to the tuberculin test twice in succession at an interval of six months, a "suspect" being one which has reacted but one time. These animals were held for subsequent tests.

The report of the veterinarian, "On April 2, 1906, the herd, then comprising 119 head, was again subjected to the test, which resulted in twenty-two reactions and suspects." On June 26, 1906, our veterinarian addressed a communication to Professor A. M. Soule, dean and director, indicating that other animals had reacted, and advised that certain ones "be sold for beef, subject to inspection at slaughter, the remaining three head to be separated from the balance of the herd, and that their milk be not used for any purpose whatever in the raw state." Again, on May 14, 1907, a complete test of the herd of 104 head was commenced. This time twenty-one head were held for a second test for confirmation, which was conducted in July and resulted in eight reactions, followed by the same recommendations by the writer.

In the fall of this year I came to the V. P. I. as president of this institution. A few months later, in the winter, I directed a general test to embrace every animal in the herd, with the result that out of 132 head there were 35 reactions. Appreciating the gravity of the situation which faced us, we called to our aid the United States Department of Agriculture at Washington, and the June test of this year was made in conjunction with their experts, Dr. B. T. Woodward and R. T. McKee, of the Bureau of Animal Industry. At that time we have not only followed the advice of the department in all attempts at eradication, carrying out, both in spirit and in letter, every recommendation, but we have had a small new barn, especially designed for the treatment of this disease, and have entered conjointly into experimental work planned to cover a period of at least five years, the object being to determine whether or not an attempt at curative treatment of tuberculosis in cattle would be practical as an adjunct to the eradication of tuberculosis from dairy and breeding herds.

The methods we are now using here have been successful in eradicating tuberculosis from hundreds of herds, some of them belonging to other agricultural colleges, and in the end they will be successful here. The trouble here seems to have been that the disease was unrecognized until twenty-two animals were infected, and the barns were thoroughly saturated with infective material. The barns here, while handsome to look at, are thoroughly unsanitary in their internal arrangements, and the dirt, the wooden floors, the wooden box stalls, stanchions and feed troughs, no methods of washing down, and above all, no ceiling receptacle for manure. To give us relief, the board of visitors, at a great sacrifice, has just made an appropriation to triple the amount of window space, lay concrete floors, gutters and feed troughs, and provide iron stanchions and other sanitary fixtures, and build a manure pit. We can hope for no relief until we get a barn which can be cleaned. At our last dissection we employed twenty hands for three days in scraping, scrubbing and distributing 200 pounds of chloride of lime, using 100 barrels each of formalin and permanganate of potash and 500 gallons of bichloride of mercury solution. With all this, we have absolutely no assurance, but a little hope, that the barn is clean. This state of affairs is not only expensive, but troublesome. We dare sell no animal till thoroughly tested, not alone

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\$2.50 Straw Hats, all shapes, now	\$1.70
\$3.00 Straw Hats, all shapes, now	\$2.10
\$7.50 and \$10.00 Panama Hats, all shapes	\$5.15
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Boys' \$1.00 Wash Suits, all colors and styles	60c
Boys' \$1.50 Wash Suits, all colors and styles	80c
Boys' \$2.00 Wash Suits, all colors and styles	\$1.10
Boys' \$2.50 Wash Suits, all colors and styles	\$1.60
Boys' \$3.50 Wash Suits, all colors and styles	\$2.20
Boys' \$3.00 Knickerbocker Khaki Suits	\$1.70
Boys' \$3.50 Knickerbocker Khaki Suits	\$2.10
Boys' \$1.25 Baseball Suits and Caps	90c
Boys' \$1.50 Baseball Suits and Caps	\$1.15
Boys' \$1.00 and \$1.25 Plain Knee Pants, Blue Serges and Mixtures	55c
Boys' \$1.50 and \$2.00 Plain Knee Pants, Blue Serges and Mixtures	75c
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10c Fine Cambric Handkerchiefs	6c
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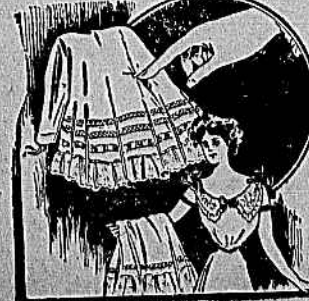
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by our own, but by government veterinarians.

Regarding the charge that we have used milk from tubercular cows at the V. P. I., I will make the following statement. In the fall of 1907, when I came here, I held a conference with Professor W. D. Saunders, then professor of dairying, now State Dairy and Food Commissioner, and we decided, in spite of protests, that henceforth no milk, even of "suspects," should be sent to the V. P. I. creamery, and for the past two years this has not been done except on one occasion, when for a period of something like a week good and bad milk were mixed. It was my own fault. I yielded to unwisdom, although expert advice. As this "bad" milk and cream was that used in my own family, however, and as I am a physician with at least a fair knowledge of such things, you may rest assured that the milk was good and safe, even if technically infected as "bad."

Next, as regards deficits on the farm. Under the head of the farm account are gathered the charges for various and diverse forms of expenditure, and for the last five years, certainly, the expenditures have been vastly in excess of receipts, but it must be remembered that this farm is unlike any other farm in the State in its necessary costs. What practical farmer would gather together herds of Jerseys, Holsteins, Guernseys, Short Horns, Herefords and Polled Angus, with grade and pure Percherons amongst the horses; Berkshires, Durocs and White Yorkshires amongst the hogs; and Dorsets and Shropshires amongst the sheep, and five pure-bred types of poultry, and keep all these separate and in exhibition shape, and try to make money?

And yet this must be done here, for selected groups of these animals are groomed and led daily to our judging

pavilion for the examination and study and critical judging of students. It is on its face an impossibility. Moreover, in addition to the work of the regular government experiment station here, the college aids and assists in various and diverse experiments with its own funds, under the account of "the farm." Instead of there being a deficit this past year of \$12,000, as charged, the total expenditure for the farm during that period was but \$13,467, and of this sum \$14,412 was paid for rent of land and \$3,260 was for improvement and new equipment. We

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had a disastrous crop year last year, incessant rains in this locality causing wheat to sprout in the shock and injury the corn crop, but this comes occasionally to every farmer. I feel sure that if a system of bookkeeping was devised which would separate experiment work, exhibit work, and work necessary for teaching, from the real farm work, the so-called annual deficit of five or six thousand dollars would be made to appear in a very different light.

Next, as regards our epidemic of hog cholera. In the fall of 1908 we sold at public auction some four dozen high-bred pigs. The purchasers were present and saw them all and will agree with me that there never was a healthier looking or handsomer lot of pigs put on the block. Some of these animals, however, were even then infected with cholera, in the stage of "incubation" when no symptoms are manifest. How it got in our herd is not proven. The board of visitors made a long and thorough investigation and even then they could not decide on the source. If any injured party wishes to see the evidence taken let him come and we will gladly go over the whole matter. We have nothing to conceal. In conclusion, we do not care if it is proclaimed, even from the housetops, that for the last two years we have favored the school of agriculture; proclaim also that we have not enough students and wish more; proclaim if you like, that we have had widespread disease amongst our herds and droves; but it must be proclaimed also that we are putting up the best fight against all of these disasters which our funds and other conditions will allow. These are the facts, and we do not fear the truth, but we must ask for the whole truth. We challenge an investi-

gation by the Legislature, or by any other seriously-interested body. We have nothing to suppress or conceal; every officer here is willing to show his books and records to any citizen of the State who wants to know the truth, but we do protest against the statement that certain parties gained their facts "at Blacksburg," when they have never, at any time, approached its president, the dean of its agricultural school, the director of the experiment station or any other officer of

this institute for information. Very respectfully, P. B. BARRINGER, President.

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